TECHNICAL NOTES

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The Twin Cities Transportation Equipment Industry as a User of Wood

The transportation equipment industry within the city limits of Minneapolis-St. Paul is one of seven groups[1/] selected for a pilot study of the industrial use of wood in the Twin Cities. Data on these seven groups will be used to design a measurement scheme that will provide adequate volume estimates and related information on the many phases of wood consumption by all Twin Cities industry. The 27 firms in the transportation equipment industry were canvassed by the Division of Forestry of the Minnesota Conservation Department, and some of the facts gathered will serve to illustrate the type of data gathered for analysis and subsequent sample design.

How much wood does the industry use?--Seventeen of the 27 firms purchased no wood for use in manufacture or shipment of their products. The remaining 10 reported purchase of nearly 670,000 board-feet in 1956, with 2 of the larger firms accounting for nearly three-fourths of this total.

What is the wood used for?--Crating and boxing for both domestic and overseas shipment of products consumed 85 percent of the wood purchased. Three percent went into pallet and skid construction and repair, while 12 percent was utilized in manufacture of items such as boats, truck and trailer beds and bodies, and handles.

What species are used?--Forty-eight percent of the volume utilized was of unspecified softwood species largely of western origin, 22 percent was aspen, 15 percent red and white oak with red oak strongly dominant, 11 percent northern pine, and 4 percent other miscellaneous hardwoods.

In what form does it come?--None of this material was blocking, 4 percent was dimension, and the remainder lumber. All of the lumber was at least air-dry, while 40 percent was planed, and 60 percent was left in its rough sawn state.

Where is it obtained?--Wood purchases were made from four distinct sources. Sixty percent was supplied by retail lumber yards, 30 percent was shipped directly to users from local sawmills, 6 percent was bought as standing timber and sawn on contract, and 4 percent was handled through a local wholesaler.

These facts relate to one small part (about 1 percent) of the total industrial activity of Minneapolis-St. Paul. But with these and other facts still to be gathered, it will eventually be possible to estimate and evaluate the quality and species of total wood use in relation to its sustaining resource.

1/ Using the standard industrial classification (Bureau of the Budget), which divides industries into 20 major groups. The seven selected for the pilot study were: Lumber and Wood Products, Primary Metal Products, Fabricated Metal Products, Machinery, Electrical Machinery, Transportation Equipment, and Miscellaneous Manufacturing.

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